

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of the claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for packaging a product arranged in a tray located within a sealing chamber having an upper part and a lower part which are movable relative to each other wherein an upper film located in a distance above the product is clamped along an edge surrounding the tray and thereafter is stretched in a direction extending away from the product and pulled from the clamped edge, and wherein subsequently the tray is raised relative to the upper film and then the edge of the tray and the upper film are sealed, wherein the clamping of the edge of the upper film is carried out by means of closing the chamber parts.
2. (Original) A method for packaging a product arranged in a tray according to claim 1, wherein the space surrounding the product is evacuated before sealing.
3. (Original) A method for packaging a product arranged in a tray according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the space surrounding the product is filled with a gas before sealing.

4. (Currently Amended) A packaging machine for packaging a product, comprising:
a sealing station with a chamber defining an internal space and comprising an upper
tool with a sealing element tool and a lower tool, the upper and lower tools
being which are movable relative to each other into an opened and into a
closed position;
a tray which is insertable into the internal space when in the opened position;
a device for supplying an upper film into the interior space of the chamber;
a drive mechanism for the relative movement of the upper and the lower tool and for
the sealing element tool; and
a control for controlling the drive mechanism which is formed such that the chamber
is closed after the supply of the tray and by closing to thereby firmly clamp
the upper film along an edge surrounding an edge of the tray, thereafter the
upper film is stretched in a direction upwardly away from the product and
pulling from the edge, then the tray is raised towards the upper film, and
subsequently sealed thereto.

5. (Original) A packaging machine according to claim 4, wherein the control is formed
such that an evacuating of the space surrounding the product and if necessary, a supplying of gas
into this space is performed before the sealing.

6. (Previously Presented) A packaging machine according to claim 4 with:
a device for accommodating a tray in the interior of the chamber; and
wherein the device for accommodating the tray is bi-directionally movable between a
first position in which the tray has a maximum distance to the plane of the
upper film and a second position in which the tray has a minimum distance to
this plane.

7. (Original) A packaging machine according to claim 6, wherein the upper tool
comprises a forming tool with a recess facing the lower tool.

8. (Original) A packaging machine according to claim 6 or 7, comprising:
a tray carrier insertable into the sealing station for sealing of a package is provided
having a frame which is supported between the upper and the lower tool,
when the sealing station is closed, and a carrying part;
and wherein the carrying part is bi-directionally movable for performing the variation
of the distance.

9. (New) The method of claim 1 wherein the upper film is stretched in a direction
extending upwardly away from the product.